

EXERCISES TO MAKE YOUR HANDS LESS TENDER

Hand injuries can be very tender. Often, tenderness in scars gets worse starting one to two weeks after injury or surgery. Unfortunately, this tenderness does not always go away by itself. It is important to begin to touch the scar to help it become more 'normal' and less sensitive.

The goal of these exercises is to make your wounds less tender. It is normal for these exercises to be somewhat uncomfortable while doing them or shortly afterwards. If the exercises are too painful, try using less pressure. If that does not work, then give yourself a several hour break and try again.

PERCUSSION (Tapping):

1. Tap lightly on the area of your hand that is tender. You can tap on the sensitive area with a fingertip of your other hand or with a light object such as a pencil.
2. Find the spot that is the most tender.
3. Note the time, and begin to tap rapidly (2-3 times a second), lightly and continuously on the most tender area.
4. Keep tapping without a break for 3 minutes or until you notice the feeling in the area change. The area may start to feel numb or it may simply feel a little bit less tender.
5. Take a minute rest and begin again. You may find that a different area is now the tenderest spot.

This exercise should be done as many times as possible during the day. It can take many thousands of taps to really change the tenderness in a sore area.

FRICTION MASSAGE:

The goal of friction massage is to **STRETCH** the scar tissue beneath the skin. Do this exercise **without** cream in order to be able to stretch the skin well.

1. Place a finger tip of your other hand against the central area of the scar.
2. Mentally note four directions that the skin can be pushed sideways: near, far, left and right.
3. With your finger tip pressed firmly against the scar and without sliding, gently but steadily push the skin to one side as if you were trying to slide the skin off of the bone. Hold this position for five seconds.
4. Briefly relax and then repeat this manoeuvre in one of the other directions. Make sure you attempt to slide the skin in all four directions.